UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social Council

Distr.
LIMITED

E/CN.17/1996/L.12
30 April 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
Fourth session
18 April-3 May 1996
Agenda item 5 (b)

DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURES, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO AGENDA 21

Draft decision submitted by the Chairman

Information for decision-making

(Chapter 40 of Agenda 21)

1. The Commission on Sustainable Development, having taken note of the report of the Secretary-General on information for decision-making (E/CN.17/1996/18 and Add.1), welcomes the measures taken by Governments to make information more accessible to decision makers at the national level.

2. The Commission expresses its appreciation of the meetings held during the inter-sessional period to further the work and understanding of issues addressed in chapter 40 of Agenda 21, particularly as they relate to indicators of sustainable development, Earthwatch, Development Watch, the establishment of common and compatible systems of access to data, and common core data sets.

3. The Commission takes note of the progress made in the implementation of the work programme on indicators of sustainable development, approved at its third session, and welcomes that progress, particularly with regard to the preparation of methodology sheets for the various indicators.

4. The Commission invites Governments to test, develop and use the indicators of sustainable development based, inter alia, on the work done to date, as appropriate, on identifying the indicators and preparing the corresponding methodology sheets. In this regard, Governments are encouraged, as appropriate,

to adopt indicators at the national level and to consider the advantages of working in partnership with other countries in the testing, further development and use of the indicators. For example, twinning between countries with more and less experience in using indicators could prove beneficial to both.

5. The Commission expresses its appreciation of the conclusions of the meeting on common and compatible systems of access to data, and requests the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the Secretariat, in cooperation with other organizations of the United Nations system, and within available resources, to establish a sustainable development home page on the World Wide Web, with "hot links" to relevant databases throughout the United Nations system, as a means to facilitate access by countries to sources of information relevant to sustainable development.

6. The Commission requests the Economic and Social Council's Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group on Informatics to give particular attention to devising a means of facilitating the access of States Members of the United Nations to environmental databases throughout the United Nations system, within available resources.